NORTHWEST HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

GARDEN notes

FALL 2016

Rosa glauca and [illegible]
in the garden of B[illegible] Piskor, Victoria
Photo by Richie Steffen

An English-Style HEDGEROW on Puget Sound

Words by Lee Neff

Photos by John Neff except as noted

Our beloved neighbor Keith is convinced that my husband, John, and I made a hedgerow between our two properties a few miles north of Kingston because we were intent upon defending ourselves against the vision of his early morning habit of drinking his coffee on his deck in his underwear. As most of our hedgerow's plants now range from five to ten feet tall, it has certainly come to serve that unforeseen benefit, but in truth, we first thought about creating a hedgerow to give our long, narrow property and garden a sense of enclosure and boundary on its northern side.

History and Experience

Between 1987 and 2001 I was fortunate to enjoy several trips to visit British gardens. Those travels in England and Wales were crisscrossed with numerous hedgerows, and my admiration of their utility and beauty grew. Since then, with the help of the Elisabeth C. Miller Library, I have learned that hedgerows came to the British Isles with the Saxons, over 1000 years ago. Recent years of boundary changes as well as new approaches to farming have seen the destruction of many old hedgerows, and their loss has produced increased research into their history and usefulness, both to humans and wildlife. Research shows that hedgerows were traditionally begun as hawthorn hedges, with plants placed very close together, perhaps with their stems only a few inches apart; later, the trunks were split, bent, and layered so they formed an impenetrable, thorny barrier. In general, the number of shrub species established in a 30-yard section of a hedgerow is thought to indicate its age, each species adding another hundred years to the count. Therefore, a hedgerow now composed of ten shrub species may have been created in Saxon times.

Hedgerows were essential for keeping village cows grazing on communal village pasture and preventing their wandering into neighbors' laundry lines or wheat fields. While protecting stock from outside predators, they also provided the community a nearby source of firewood and lumber. And, of course, they offered flowers to pick, berries to gather, and honey to harvest, as well as the beauty of birds, butterflies, and other living things to admire.

We designed our hedgerow for drought-tolerance, for year-round interest, as shelter and food for birds, and with two large gaps to make it easy for neighbors to visit one another. But we have also had several black bear visits and some tentative nibbles from our neighborhood deer.

↑ Our gardener, Pam Buitenveld, planting and watering plants placed in the first section of the hedgerow. The white stakes mark the property line, the backbone of the hedgerow. Photo by Nancy Heckler

←Foliage knitting even more tightly, with glimpses of both sides of the hedge.

↓ A real hedgerow! Featuring green and white viburnum flowers amid the foliage of barberries, hollies, *Cotinus obovatus*, and *Physocarpus opulifolius*.

[illegible] HEDGEROW on Puget Sound

↑ Our enclosed kitchen garden as it relates to the hedgerow, with a mature madrona on the edge of the bank above Puget Sound.

↓ Our black-tailed deer—this time three does—deciding which leaves are tastiest.

Plans and Plants

We embarked upon this project during the summer of 2008. Our neighbors Keith and Michelle were agreeable to the idea of a two-sided hedgerow as well as a mix of plants. Fortunately, we were immediately offered plants, advice, and help by several good friends: Richie Steffen and Dan Hinkley offered suggestions and plants they did not need, and Nancy Heckler said she would help me gather plants and keep a list of what was on hand. We did not have a specific number of plants in mind for a 10 × 200-foot hedgerow, but Richie had suggested that we focus on a center line of mostly evergreens that would grow eight-to-ten feet tall and then add five-to-seven-foot plants on the sides. So with that wisdom in mind, Nancy and I went shopping.

First we visited our local nurseries. We bought every sort of viburnum, mahonia, barberry, and osmanthus we could find. We hunted for hollies we knew we "had to have" and a *Cornus mas* we "could not live without." Then we visited Far Reaches, Steamboat Island, Colvos Creek, and Cistus nurseries. We always came home with something new and exciting or ideal for our situation.

Having been assured by friends that this garden, close to Puget Sound, would be warmer than our former garden near Seward Park, I also looked for several somewhat tender genera I had enjoyed there: *Azara, Rhamnus,* and *Pittosporum*. Dan's and Richie's gifts included *Garrya issaquahensis*, hydrangeas, *Staphlea pinnata*, and barberries. Nancy and I added *Cotinus obovatus, Myrica californica,* and *Cotoneaster glaucophyllus*, often buying three or four of each.

By mid-September we had accumulated a stash of over 300 individual plants, comprising 120 species or cultivars, most of them in one-gallon containers. As a

group, they were a stunning collection of colors and textures, both evergreen and deciduous, from which to paint our mural. We had only one of some selections but as many as six or eight of others—choices that would help us both repeat some leaf shapes and colors often enough to hold the whole together as well as create unique combinations of plants every few yards. We were eager to begin.

Placing Plants

The remainder of September was spent admiring how a friend and his backhoe removed the grass, weeds, and miscellaneous "what-is-that?"s to reveal the space we were working with. We marked the property line that would be the midline of the hedge and pulled out of the stash the roses and other shrubs that would be equally divided, offering floral snippets for cutting as well as food for hummingbirds.

Finally, Nancy and I started the huge job of placing plants. We worked in five- to ten-yard sections, placing the mostly evergreen, center-line plants first, then adding similar combinations to each side. We tried to consider foliar contrast or compatibility as well as ultimate size and did our best to use a variety of species so we would not have only barberries or viburnums remaining for the final section.

In general, we placed the plants two or three feet apart with a pair put closer together, if forming part of the backbone, or even farther apart, if we wanted them to be more visible on each side. Placing the plants was a game, although it is now clear that some of our supposedly five-to-six-foot selections have become ten-foot edge plants that visually block the subtle foliage combinations behind them. Ah, well, sometimes we prune.

Planting and Replanting

The tougher work of planting each selection and seeing that it was well watered was done by Pam Buitenveld, who has gardened for us since we first moved to Kingston. Three-quarters of the hedgerow was planted by early November, and we decided to wait until 2009 to plant the last section. Little did we know that those recent mild winters were to be followed by three very cold ones. In March 2009 we lost our cistus and pittosporum babies; the next winter, another bunch turned up their toes, and in November 2010 we had three straight nights of 14 degrees. Any plants that had not been completely convinced to live in our garden became terminally discouraged. In the end, we lost a third of all our hedgerow purchases and a number of additional plants throughout the garden. So much for being close to the Sound!

In late spring of 2011 I visited our son and his family in Pullman, and one afternoon I went to a nursery they recommended. The salesman thought it was odd to have a west-side gardener asking about hardiness, but he showed me the shrubs that did well in Pullman, some of which we had already purchased, and I bought several more of those in addition to a *Physocarpus opulifolius* 'Coppertina' that had scrumptious copper-bronze foliage. If these plants could survive in Pullman, surely they could manage a stiff winter in Kingston. *P. opulifolius* 'Diabolo' and *P. opulifolius* 'Center Glow' are subtly different, but with equally colorful foliage. All have grown well for us. We did not replace every plant that died. Some close neighbors were already enthusiastically filling the empty spaces. But where gaps were larger, replacement plants were tucked in.

Now, in the summer of 2016, some shrubs are already close to their anticipated size; others are well on their way. We continue to monitor the plants, replacing ones that need water more often than twice a summer or have not grown and knitted as hoped. We also remove weeds and continue to add groundcovers and vines, such as Washington's native honeysuckle, *Lonicera ciliosa*. And we continue to enjoy the year-round beauty and entertainment provided by the birds and critters that call the hedgerow home. As far as I can tell, the most disappointing result of this venture is that while Keith is sitting in his underwear, on his deck, drinking his morning coffee, he can no longer see John and me, in our pajamas, gathering raspberries for our cereal.

Lee Neff is a former NHS board member.

Some Favorite Hedgerow Plants

Azara microphylla

Berberis linearifolia 'Orange King'

Cornus mas 'Golden Glory'

Cotinus obovatus

Garrya elliptica

Ilex altaclarensis 'Lawsoniana'

Mahonia × *media* 'Lionel Fortescue,' 'Arthur Menzies,' and 'Charity'

Osmanthus × *burkwoodii*

Physocarpus opulifolius 'Diablo,' 'Coppertina,' and 'Center Glow'

Rhamnus alaternus 'Argenteovariegatus'

Rosa glauca

Rosa × *odorata* 'Mutabilis'

Staphalea pinnata

Viburnum lantana 'Variegata'

Sources

Streeter, David, and Rosamond Richardson. *Discovering Hedgerows.* London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1982.

Thomas, Eric, and John T. White. *Hedgerow.* London: Dorling Kindersley, 1980.

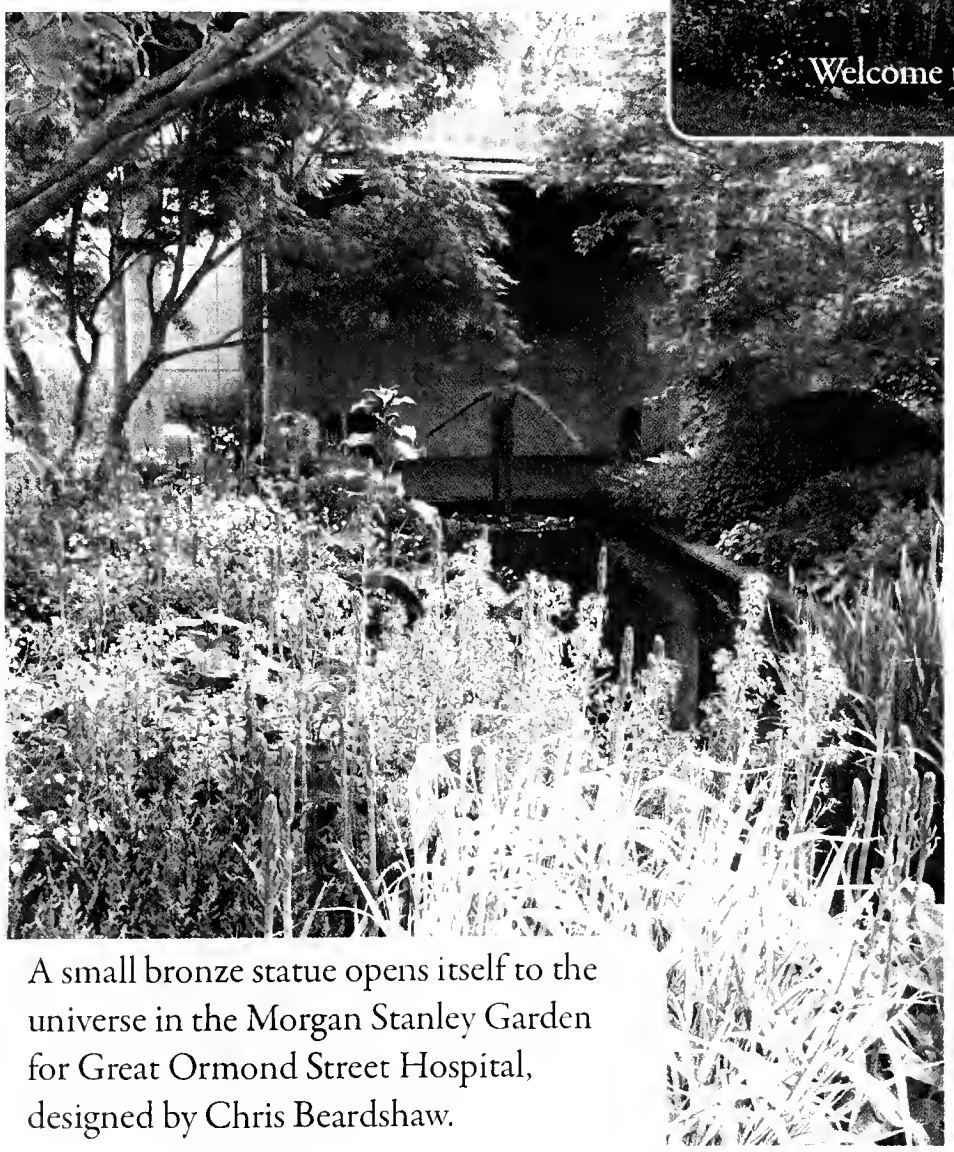
CHELSEA

Words and photos by Marty Wingate

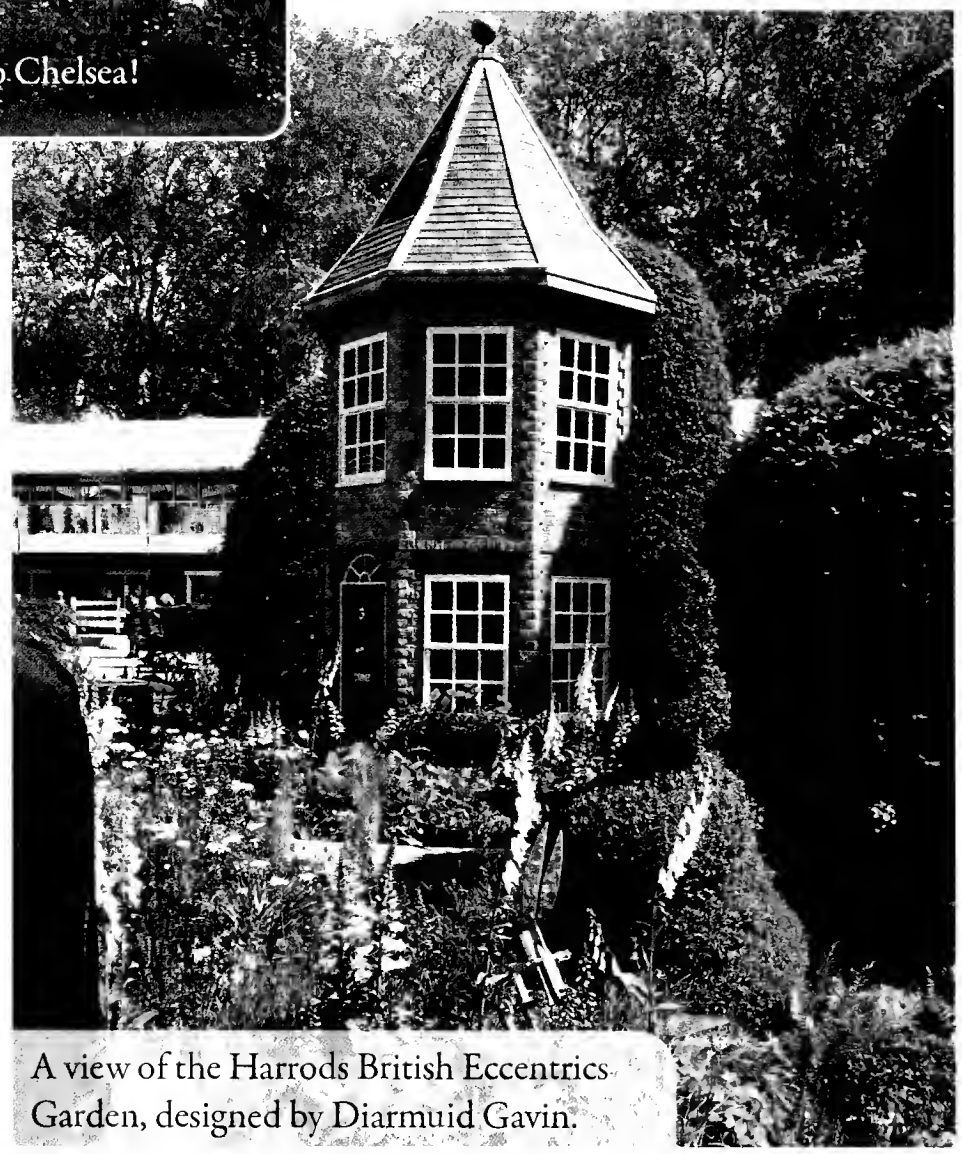
Each spring the horticultural world turns its eyes to London for the Royal Horticultural Society's Chelsea Flower Show. The 2016 show ran from May 24 to 28, showcasing plants, design, and not a few glasses of Pimm's.

In one featured garden at this year's show, a band played while, on either side of a remarkably staid sunken Italianate pool, conical bay trees twirled and box balls bobbed up and down; at the foot of the pool, a ring of herbs danced around an octagonal brick folly. Considering Chelsea's reputation for exquisite plants in sophisticated landscapes, the music-hall aspects of this display did not go unnoticed. But the garden had sprung from the mind of Irish designer Diarmuid Gavin (NHS speaker, 2006), known for his seven-story-high tower* made of scaffolding at the 2012 show. And so this year's Harrods British Eccentrics Garden may have been unusual but certainly not unexpected. More than likely, the show officials *hoped* for an outlandish creation from Gavin—after all, they gave him the triangle at the bottom of Main Avenue—pricier for the designer, but viewable from all sides, even through a window in the shed at the back, which revealed a windup toy of the inventor hard at work. Gavin credits William Heath Robinson, an early-20th-century illustrator who delighted in drawing complicated solutions to simple problems, as the inspiration for the garden, along with the creators from Aardman Animations, home of Wallace and Gromit.

A recent trend toward moving display gardens to permanent sites after the show closes continued this year, promising

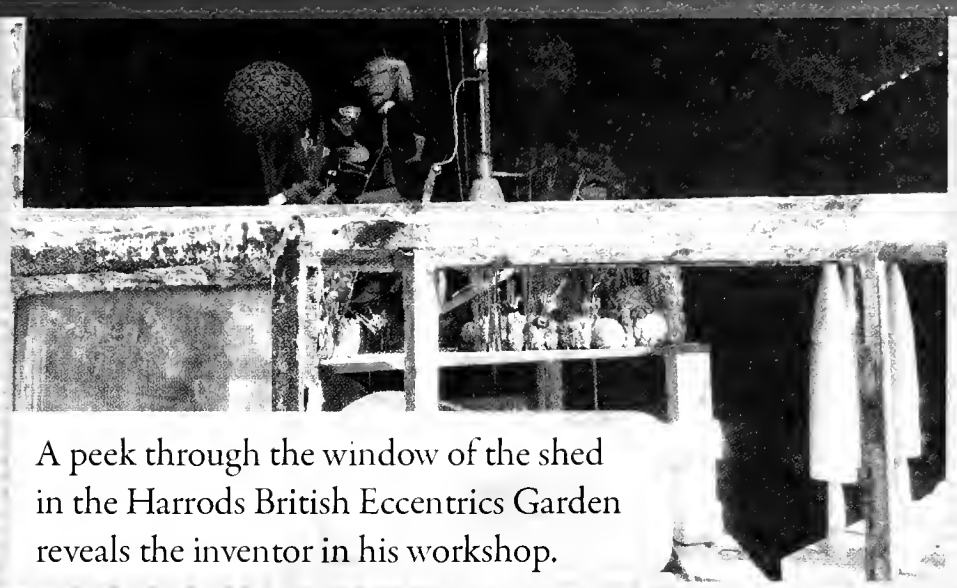


A small bronze statue opens itself to the universe in the Morgan Stanley Garden for Great Ormond Street Hospital, designed by Chris Beardshaw.



A view of the Harrods British Eccentrics Garden, designed by Diarmuid Gavin.

Allium display in the Great Pavilion



A peek through the window of the shed in the Harrods British Eccentrics Garden reveals the inventor in his workshop.

another life after those five fantastic days in May. The concept isn't all that new, as gardens in the past have lived on, notably one from 1929, when Mrs. Sherman Hoyt traveled from California to Chelsea with a cactus exhibit. After the show, the collection found a home at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. But the gesture has picked up speed. Chris Beardshaw (a judge at the 2016 Northwest Flower & Garden Show) designed the Morgan Stanley Garden for Great Ormond Street Hospital (note how the sponsors get their names in the garden's title). Its relocation to the roof of a second-story building in the hospital's complex required moving more than 30 mature trees, topiary, and hedging; rebuilding the pool; and installing the rest of the herbaceous plantings. In place, it will be viewable from the surrounding taller buildings and be available as a retreat where patients and their families can spend quiet and restorative time.

Also on the move is the RHS Greening Grey Britain Garden for Health, Happiness and Horticulture. Designer Ann-Marie Powell's display encouraged the greening-up of cities in the UK, where small front gardens are being lost at an alarming rate, mostly as they are paved over for parking. Residents of the Angell Town estate in Lambeth, a London borough, helped to build the garden at the show and can now perennially enjoy the fruits of their labor, since the garden has been moved to the estate's Little Angel's Park.

Also this year, the distinction between the garden categories blurred a bit—not with the Main Avenue show gardens, which remain pretty much the stars of the show (highlighted by the biggest names in design)—but with the Fresh and Artisan displays, which showed some overlap. In the Fresh Gardens—noted for their conceptual, cutting-edge style and for making a statement—Juliet Sargeant's Modern Slavery Garden celebrated Parliament's passage of the Modern Slavery Act, and with freestanding but closed doors made it clear that modern slavery still exists. Meanwhile, the Artisan Gardens—smaller, more intimate, and known for their high level of horticulture and their sensitive design—have taken on an edge. A Greek folly and fine plantings in the Meningitis Now Futures Garden, by John Everiss, were offset by startling cedar sculptures showing the effects, struggles, and courage of young people affected by the disease.

This year's award for best plant went to *Clematis koreana* AMBER 'Wit141205', and in the Great Pavilion, a display of hepaticas won a gold medal for Ashwood Nurseries. However, should you desire one of the hepaticas—or something from one of the other eye-popping displays of allium, chrysanthemum, delphinium, pelargonium, or sweet peas—you'd best pick up a catalog, snap a photo, or jot down the name. Because although you can buy hats and spades and aprons, mugs and gloves, books and boots, tea towels, and even fudge, you cannot buy a plant at the Chelsea Flower Show.

For a fair bit of plant shopping and a good day out, gardeners take their children, their wheelie boxes, and a picnic and go off to the RHS Malvern Spring Festival in early May or the RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show in July. The Chelsea restrictions—which include no babes in arms and no pushchairs—may have as much to do with space as with tradition. That space is 11 acres at the grounds of the Royal Hospital in Chelsea, whereas Hampton Court boasts 34 acres and Malvern even more. You can buy more than a hat at those shows.

But none of that matters, because Chelsea is Chelsea, and when the third week in May arrives, everyone in Britain is a gardener. ~

Marty Wingate is an author and NHS board member.

**How high the tower? What we call the first floor of a building here in the States is called the ground floor in the UK—their first floor is our second. This leads us to believe that Gavin's seven-story tower was, to us, eight stories.*

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NHS Scholarships

In the spring issue of GardenNotes, we learned about the history of the Elisabeth C. Miller Scholarship, which NHS has awarded each fall since 1988 to deserving UW graduate students, and in the summer issue we heard from the first three recipients of that scholarship: Clay Antieau, Scot Medbury, and Sarah Reichard. We complete our series with a look at three more-recent recipients: Ray Larson (2001), Hillary Burgess (2011), and Eve Rickenbaker (2014).

Eve Rickenbaker

Ray Larson

It's hard to believe that it was 15 years ago that I received an Elisabeth C. Miller Scholarship from Northwest Horticultural Society. I had initially been reluctant to apply, as I was already a UW employee receiving some tuition relief under a new staff program, and I didn't want to feel like I might be taking any potential support away from another deserving graduate student. But Richard Hartlage, NHS president at the time, encouraged me to apply, saying that the fund was unusually flush that year and there would likely be several recipients. As it turned out, all five scholarship applicants received funding, so I needn't have worried. And receiving the scholarship made a huge difference for me.

I'd been at the UW Center for Urban Horticulture for several years by then and had become a fan of NHS. Of all the horticultural groups in the area, they were the most accessible and the most passionate about plants and gardens, and they consistently brought in speakers and offered classes that were both educational and inspiring. They were also the most generous and welcoming to new gardeners and had the most to offer students of horticulture—of all ages. I appreciated the support they provided the Miller Library—which I used constantly—and I knew of their important role in the founding of CUH, which finally gave the Arboretum the critical support space they had been lacking. The scholarship came at a crucial time for me. The May 21, 2001, firebombing at CUH had just occurred and it was an uncertain time. My office had been destroyed along with much of my course materials for that quarter. Receiving the scholarship was a real morale boost and allowed me to complete my degree with minimal financial stress. (It was a less expensive time to get a graduate degree!) Most important, I was able to reduce my UW hours during the reconstruction and take a yearlong internship at the Miller Garden. This was the most practical education I received, and it was my increasing association with NHS and all the wonderful people I met there that led me down that path. I was able to devote the rest of my time to completing my thesis.

In the years since, my thesis, "The Flora of Seattle in 1850: Major Species and Landscapes Prior to Urban Development," has been among the most borrowed resources from the Miller Library. My internship and degree led to my being hired to renovate the UW president's 1½-acre garden and to work on other projects throughout campus. I became increasingly active within NHS and served as president from 2010 to 2012. And in 2013 I was able to return to the UW Botanic Gardens as Curator of Living Collections—a job I had only dreamed of when I started graduate school. Thanks to NHS and the Miller Scholarship, and the supportive people at the UW along the way, I'm doing what I love. How wonderful is that?

Andrew Pringle

Hillary Burgess

I received an NHS scholarship in 2011 to support development of my thesis "Local and Landscape-Scale Influences of Bee Abundance and Diversity in Residential Gardens." That project allowed me to combine my interests in conservation, gardens as ecosystems, and interacting with the public by creating a citizen science project in Snohomish County, working with Dr. Sarah Reichard. Participants observed bees and other pollinators in their gardens, and I had the privilege to visit and collect information about their gardens and surrounding areas. Graduate school ignited in me a passion for citizen science, and I am now the Science Coordinator of the Coastal Observation and Seabird Survey Team (http://depts.washington.edu/coasst/), a project based at the University of Washington that monitors beached birds and marine litter along the north Pacific coast. While my work is now in the marine realm, I still get my plant fix by gardening and nurturing an ever-growing orchid collection.

Eve Rickenbaker

I moved to Seattle from coastal Georgia a little over four years ago, attracted by the diversity of the UW Botanic Gardens, the prestige of the UW graduate school, and my urge to explore mountains and plants such as those I had encoun-

tered along the Appalachian Trail. What has kept me here, however, are the bonds I have created with neighbors, friends, and colleagues. My southern drawl may never fade, but my love for the plants of this region and for the people who carefully cultivate and conserve them will never stop growing.

Presently, as a graduate student and research assistant of Dr. Sarah Reichard, I manage the Otis Douglas Hyde Herbarium while pursuing my education. The herbarium gives me the opportunity to work daily with plants and enthusiastic volunteers, as well as with school groups and garden clubs.

My research has also allowed me to combine my interests in plants and people. While working on my master's degree, I conducted focus groups with UW students in order to understand their motivations and what kept them from visiting the Washington Park Arboretum. My ultimate goal was to promote a greater appreciation of (and conservational urge toward) plants and public gardens.

My research as a PhD student focuses on how botanic gardens respond to climate change. I am currently comparing citizen science data gathered by the National Phenology Network and Project Budburst with regional herbarium specimen data on bloom time. I also hope to refine strategies for effectively communicating plant science data relevant to climate change to visitors of botanic gardens.

I am extremely grateful for the opportunities provided me by the 2014 Elisabeth C. Miller Scholarship. The Northwest Horticultural Society is a great asset to our region. We are fortunate to have an organization that comes together to support the plants we all love and that brings together so many people. Thank you for your generosity.

LITERARY NOTES
from the Miller Library

By Brian Thompson

In the early 1990s, I began my work at the Miller Library as a volunteer, checking in the new periodicals. As a lifelong gardener, I eagerly looked forward to this weekly feast of plant and garden information and inspiration.

Over time, I developed favorites from among the hundreds of titles the library receives. Topping that list was *The Garden*, the journal of the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS). I would read every issue cover-to-cover, even though a stack of other publications waited for my attention. Now, as manager of the Miller Library, I don't check in the periodicals, or find as much time as I would like to read them (alas). So I subscribe to *The Garden* at home, to read at my leisure.

Why? In my opinion it has the best overall writing and selection of subjects of the many general gardening magazines. The featured plant palette is very suitable to our climate and the culture tips are relevant and presented in an easy-to-understand manner. Yes, it is British, but it has become more cosmopolitan in recent years. In addition, I enjoy reading about the wonderful English garden shows, such as Chelsea (see Marty Wingate's article on page 6).

The Garden also has longevity—celebrating its 150th year in 2016—and the April anniversary issue is a good example of its character. Two English gardens are reviewed, one in London (suitable as a model for a small Seattle lot), the other in the country. There is a detailed report on an RHS-sponsored trial of ornamental sunflowers. Many different types of beans are considered in a veggie roundup, while the culture section focuses on the pruning of broadleaf evergreens.

The magazine has a quirky side, too—which I love. An exposé on heirloom tulips with wild, feathered color breaks tells how these are cherished, preserved (most date from the 1800s), and presented in competitive shows by members of the Wakefield and North of England Tulip Society.

The Garden is a benefit of membership in the RHS, but it is also available to read at the Miller Library—just ask for it at the front desk.

Brian Thompson is the manager and curator of horticultural literature for the Elisabeth C. Miller Library.

NEW MEMBERS

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No Fear Garden Design Series

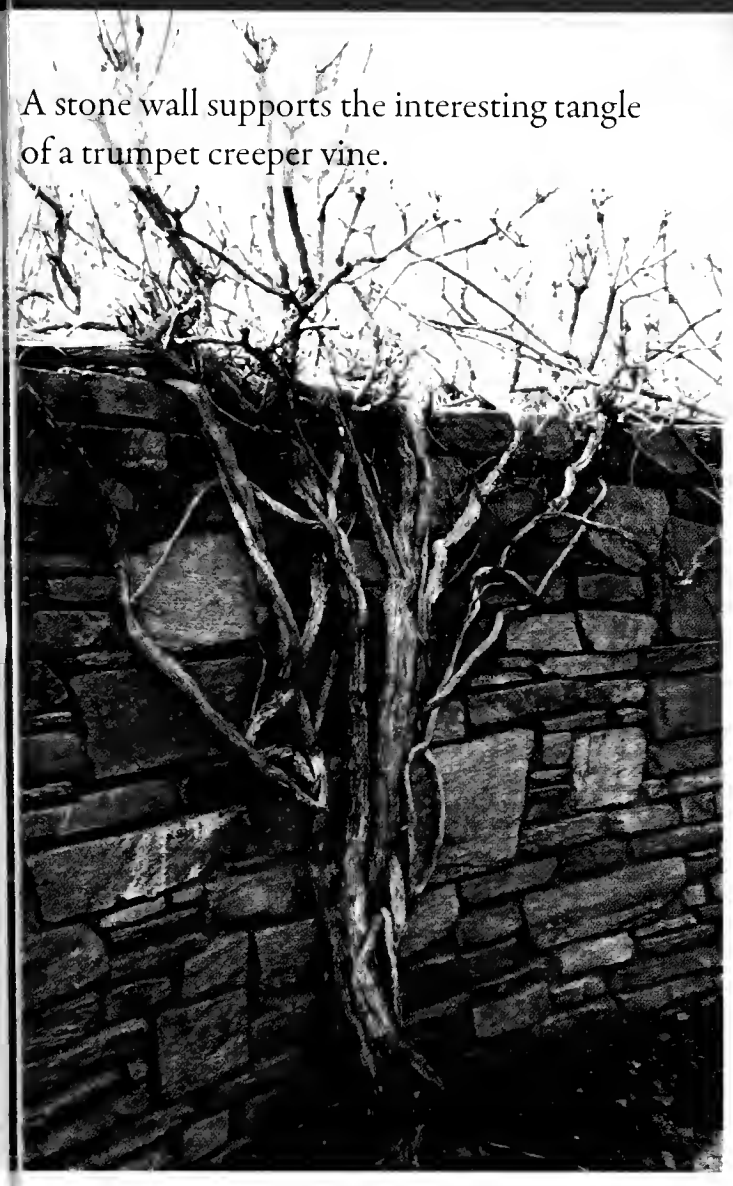
Bone Structure in the Fall Garden

Words and photos by Sue Goetz

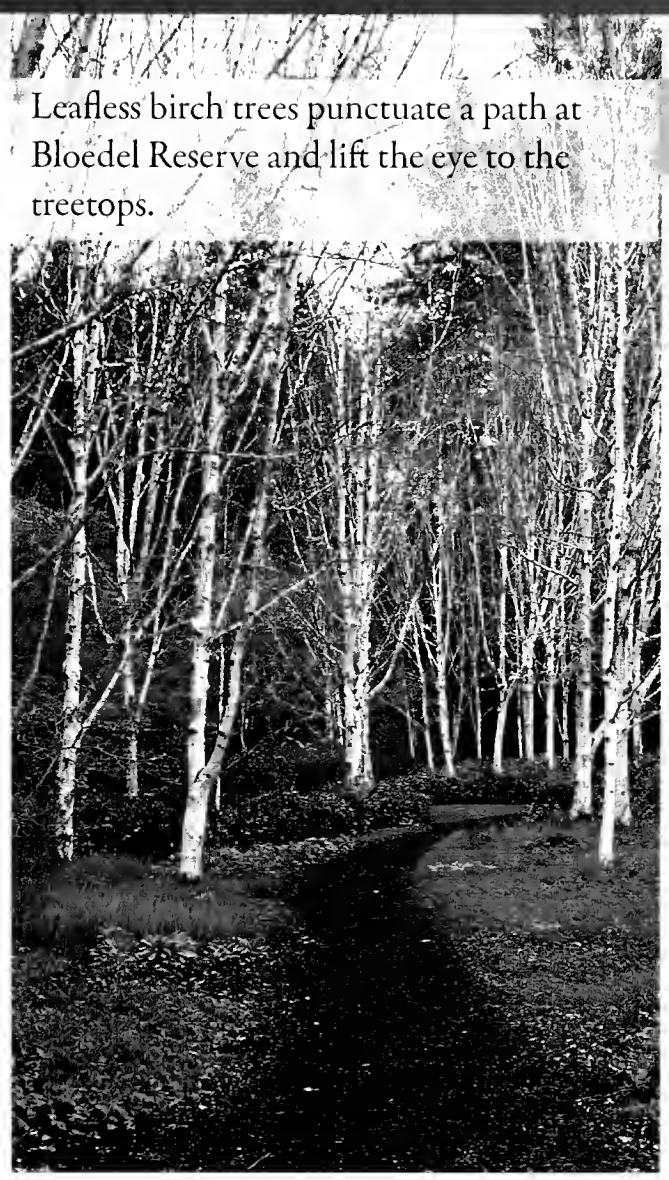
As the season changes and peak-of-summer blooms and colors fade, it is time to take a fresh look at your garden. If you feel there is something missing in your design, a good place to start is an evaluation of its permanent and structural elements. As you walk through the garden, take note of plants that need to be moved, empty spaces where something may have failed, or spaces where an "oh no, why is that there?" plant has appeared. Look beyond the color and seasonal happenings to discover the architecture of your garden. Fall and winter are the times when a garden reveals its bones: deciduous trees and shrubs lose their leaves, herbaceous perennials die down, and evergreen plants take center stage. One of the more important aspects of garden design is the framework and structure of elements that never disappear.

Look up! The structure starts overhead. When you look at how the space above eye level is filled, the sky becomes the backdrop to the garden. Begin there and build layers of interest right down to the ground. Height and vertical elements help you create scale and dimension, rather than a flat, boring landscape. Choose plants, structures, and hardscape that blend with the surroundings. For example, will they complement the colors of the house? Do they fit the style of the garden? Considering all the pieces that make up a landscape will help harmonize the whole look when the lushness and vibrancy of summer plants are not painting the scene. Landscapes that evolve into true classic gardens maintain a balance between plants and hardscape throughout the year. Thoughtful design gives importance to the changing seasons and allows the garden to evolve, as gardens always do. It is much like the structure of the interior

The hornbeam arches at Heronswood beautifully define the rooms of the garden regardless of season.



A stone wall supports the interesting tangle of a trumpet creeper vine.



Leafless birch trees punctuate a path at Bloedel Reserve and lift the eye to the treetops.

of a home. You can't easily alter how the rooms of the house are laid out, but you can paint, add artwork, move furniture, and redecorate. On the outside, well-thought-out structure and layout provide the bones of inviting landscapes as each season redecorates the garden.

It is not always about the plants. Winter is the time to add essentials to the garden that bring interest when plants are at rest. Pottery, sculpture, and structures like trellises and pergolas are all elements that compose a lasting scene. Pathways, arbors, rockery, and walls add the framework to create bold lines and movement through a garden. Garden art, birdbaths, and water features add artistry that the changing seasons cannot take away. And landscape lighting, as a permanent feature, enhances the effect of silhouettes during seasons with fewer daylight hours.

Now, about the plants. When thinking bone structure in the garden, think less about how things look in bloom or leaf and more about interesting bark, berries, and branching habits. Dormant plants can be the most interesting bones of a garden. Bare trees with unusual bark or branch silhouettes create attractive focal points. Ornamental grasses and plants with berries or colorful twigs add a long season of interest. Remnants of summer blossoms, with their faded flower and seed heads, can be part of the scene, while mophead hydrangeas and large alliums, along with miscanthus and other ornamental grasses, add interesting shapes and textures when left to linger into the next season.

Look at possibilities that allow fading summer color, permanent hardscapes, and well-chosen plants to transition into fall and winter beauty. Good design does not give preference to one season over another; rather, it embraces them all. The well-planned bone structure of a garden holds it all together and gives it life in every season.

Sue Goetz is a garden designer, author, and NHS board member.
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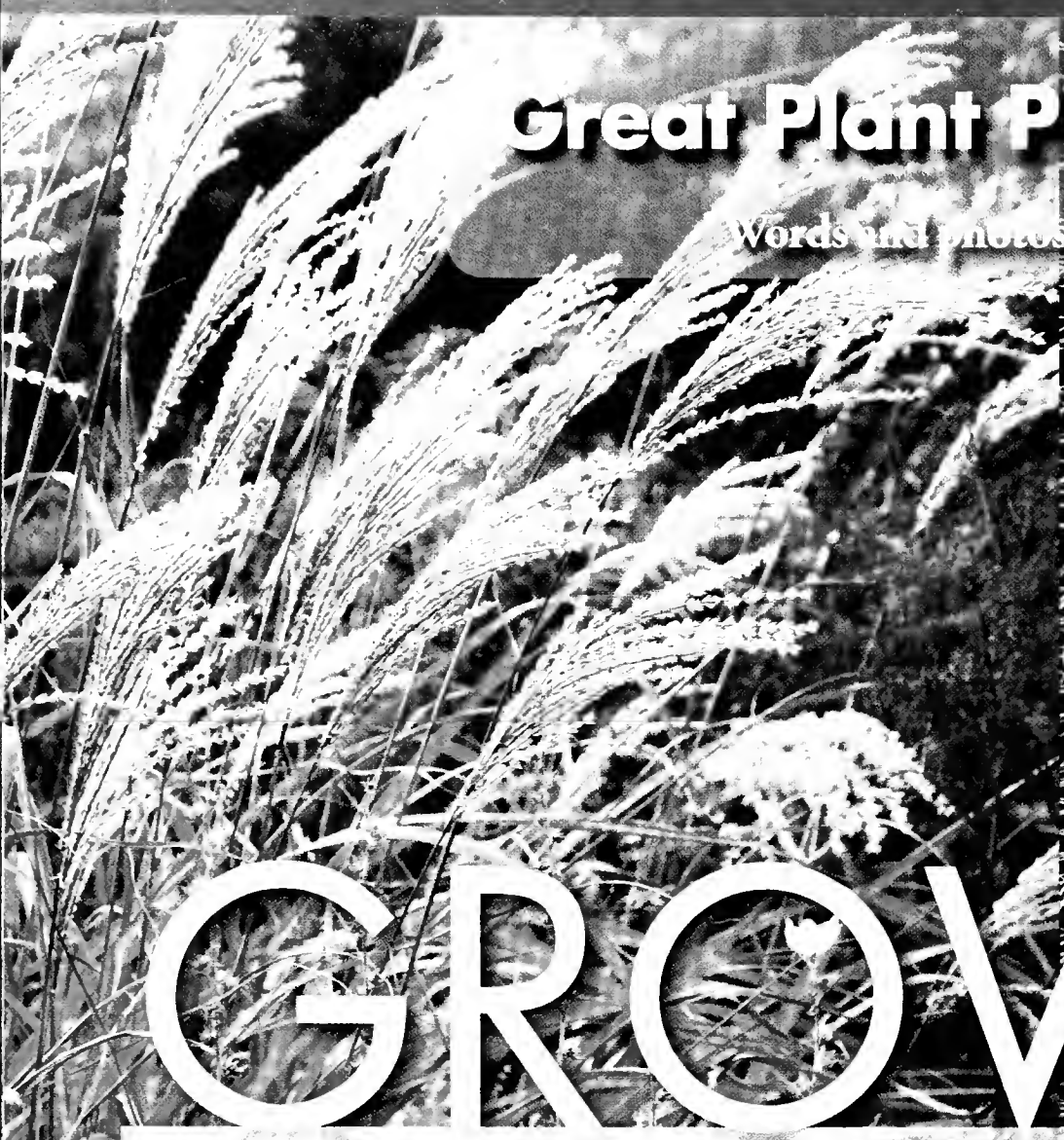
Great Plant Picks Spotlight

Words and photos by Richie Steffen

GROWING



Miscanthus sinensis cultivar

Miscanthus sinensis 'Morning Light'

Many of our garden grasses peak in early autumn, with the most spectacular and dramatic being *Miscanthus sinensis*, commonly known as silver grass or maiden grass. *Miscanthus* is a fine- to medium-textured warm-season grass that starts growing in mid to late spring. It rapidly forms dense leafy clumps that fully mature by early fall, often producing showy plume-like seed heads, technically referred to as inflorescences, in late August to early October. Once the weather starts to cool and the days grow short the foliage will gradually fade to a straw yellow and remain attractive into early winter. The dried stems can be removed to the ground once they appear too battered by the winter weather.

There are dozens of selections, varying from tight, compact small domes to towering giants, as well as many variegated cultivars. One of the major flaws of several of these selections is a tendency to flop at maturity as a result of not enough sun, too much fertilizer, or weak stems that collapse with the first autumn rains. *Miscanthus* loves rich, well-drained soil with regular summer watering and is best grown lean with as much sun as you can provide. Great Plant Picks, the primary education program of the Elisabeth C. Miller Botanical Garden, has selected several forms of silver grass that perform well in our unpredictable autumn weather.

Taller cultivars make excellent specimens for temporary summer screens and bold statements in the garden. Two of my favorites are *Miscanthus sinensis* var. *condensatus* 'Cabaret' and 'Cosmopolitan'. Both are large and exceptionally variegated, with leaf blades wider than most other *Miscanthus*, giving a bolder texture to the garden. 'Cabaret' has wide, linear bands of creamy white variegation along the midrib of the blade, while 'Cosmopolitan' has wide creamy white bands along the edges. Both are hard to miss in any garden. *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Variegatus' has a finer texture, with brilliant white–striped blades. The finer texture lends itself to a more graceful appearance in groupings and drifts. The silver feather maiden grass, *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Silberfeder', is a more toned-down German selection with green foliage and a propensity for producing an abundance of silvery plumes in early autumn.

GRASSES

Miscanthus sinensis var. *condensatus* 'Cosmopolitan'

Miscanthus sinensis 'Gold Bar'

Smaller gardens can rarely contain something as large as the grasses above, but three more moderately sized cultivars—*Miscanthus sinensis* 'Gracillimus', 'Morning Light', and 'Yaku Jima' (all 5 to 6 feet tall)—can work in most spaces. These first two selections are the darlings of the genus. The extremely thin, narrow foliage creates a hazy, delicate frame that moves with the slightest breeze. 'Gracillimus', the classic maiden grass, has bright-green leaves with a thin silver strip in the middle of each blade, while 'Morning Light' is edged in white, making it glow softly in the landscape. Few plants attain the natural grace of these two cultivars. The smallest of the three is 'Yaku Jima', a stellar selection from the southern islands of Japan. It is a compact version of 'Gracillimus' and one of the varieties I would not garden without.

For very small gardens or containers, *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Adagio' or 'Goldbar' are short and compact selections that still retain the graceful elegance of their larger counterparts. Both will remain about 3 to 4 feet tall for several years, but each is very different from the other. 'Adagio' resembles a dwarf version of 'Yaku Jima', with slender dark-green leaves and abundantly produced inflorescences that appear in late summer well above the foliage, maximizing its showiness. 'Goldbar' is a local selection made by Great Plant Picks committee member Maurice Horn of Joy Creek Nursery in Scappoose, Oregon (see "The World of *Clematis integrifolia*," spring 2016). 'Goldbar' has a tight and compact growth habit with bright-yellow bands across the leaf blade that glow in the sunlight. This is one of the slowest growing *Miscanthus*, taking five years or more to reach mature size. Owing to this slow development it typically will not produce any inflorescence in our climate.

Now is a great time to see these grasses in the landscape and find your own favorites for the garden. Each of these has a full description and growing details on the Great Plant Picks website, www.greatplantpicks.org.

Richie Steffen is the curator of the Elisabeth C. Miller Botanical Garden, where he supervises the Great Plant Picks program.

2016 Elisabeth C. Miller Scholarship Awards

By Holly Zipp

The Northwest Horticultural Society has awarded special project scholarships to support graduate student research at the University of Washington every year since 1988. Three scholarships were awarded this past June, to Roxanne Robles, Kelsey Taylor, and Loretta Fisher.

Roxanne Robles is a student in the Landscape Architecture program. Her research will explore the concept of design standards for urban air-quality control and mitigation, with a particular emphasis on the role that "smart plant selection" and other lessons from urban horticulture can offer. According to her literature review, "Plant and groupings and species variables such as leaf circumference, leaf texture, plant architecture, and plant pairings can have potent effects on air quality and the mitigation of particulate pollution (Spirn, 1986)." Roxanne will begin her research in Mexico City because of the city's poor air quality and its tradition of innovation in landscape design and research. Her scholarship funds will be used for the travel associated with this research.

Kelsey Taylor's research focus is the "competitive abilities of garden loosestrife against native wetland species," in particular *Scirpus microcarpus*, the native small-fruited bulrush. *Lysimachia vulgaris*, or garden loosestrife, was introduced for water gardening in the 1970s and has become a significant invasive in Western Washington waterways. Kelsey believes understanding its competitive abilities will help land managers develop management plans to combat it.

Loretta Fisher's research "will examine how site treatment methods might influence iridoid glycoside levels in plants, in order to enhance restoration protocols for both golden paintbrush and the Taylor's checkerspot butterfly." *Castilleja levisecta* (golden paintbrush) and the butterfly are both endangered species in Washington. The butterfly's larvae feed on the paintbrush and subsequently sequester the *iridoid glycoside* found in the plant, which serves the butterfly as a defense against predation. Loretta believes that understanding this relationship could have implications for the establishment of native wildflowers in urban gardens and pollinator corridors and ultimately influence the expansion of butterfly habitat.

We look forward to hearing about the results of their research projects in the future.

Thank you to our patrons. The Wednesday Evening Lecture Series would not be possible without the tremendous support of our patrons. Their generosity helps NHS provide an outstanding educational program for Northwest gardeners.

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President's Message

By Jackie White, NHS President

As the saying goes, time flies when you're having fun, and that has certainly been the case for me. Not only is this my sixth and final year of serving on the NHS Board but the second and last year of serving as president. Even though our bylaws require a term limit of six years, I will continue to serve in an advisory capacity to the new president. I also will remain active on the tour committee and will lend a helping hand wherever I can.

A wise longtime member told me that once you catch the NHS bug it's with you for good. She was absolutely right. I had just retired from a very busy and stressful career and was ready to play and learn more about the world of plants, when, in the summer of 2007, my good friend Renee Montgelas invited me to attend an NHS function. I immediately joined and started to volunteer for activities, such as the plant sale. Before I knew it I was spending much of my spare time traveling from Olympia to Seattle to attend Wednesday night lectures, sit on various committees, and participate in classes and tours. Little did I know that I would be invited to serve on the board, then chair the public relations committee, and ultimately serve as president. It has been a great journey and I want to thank the board members, and especially our administrator, Karin Kravitz, for making it a wonderful experience. Like Greg Graves and other great board presidents before me, I'll be around to share time and fun with all my "hort head" buddies and to continue to support NHS.

One of the things I greatly appreciate about NHS is the many volunteers who graciously offer their time, energy, and support. We are fortunate to have so many committed members. NHS is celebrating its 50th anniversary and our great success is because of you. And for that, I say a heartfelt thank you.

NHS Loses Dear Friend

Dr. Sarah Hayden Reichard touched many lives and had a tremendous impact on the horticultural community. Her leadership was inspirational in many areas, such as conservation, advocacy of the responsible control of invasive plants, and other environmentally sensitive subjects. Sarah began her relationship with NHS when she became a recipient of the NHS Elisabeth Carey Miller Scholarship in 1988, the inaugural year of the program. NHS was fortunate and honored to have Sarah serve on our Advisory Board and be a part of our organization. We are very appreciative of the time and knowledge that she shared with us and the overall support she gave us. She was a dear friend and supporter and she will be greatly missed. May you rest in peace, dear Sarah.

EVENTS

October 12, 2016
Dig This: Stylish Gardening for Savvy Gardeners
Kelly Norris
CUH Lecture 7:15 p.m.
Reception 6:45 p.m.

October 26, 2016
Founding Fathers
Andrea Wulf
50th Anniversary Series Lecture
CUH Lecture 7:15 p.m.
Reception 6:45 p.m.

November 9, 2016
Annual Meeting
How Plants Work
Linda Chalker-Scott
CUH
Reception 6:30 p.m.
Annual Meeting 7:00 p.m.
Lecture immediately following the Annual Meeting

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It would be worthwhile having a cultivated garden if only to see what Autumn does to it.

—Alfred Austin from *The Garden That I Love* (1894)

Physocarpus opulifolius 'Diabolo' at Bellevue Botanical Garden
Photo by Richie Steffen

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